

Box 3 File 17

COHIST

HISTORY OF VANCEBURG
«with Emphasis on Housing»

by
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«In partial requirement of Home Economics
Course No. 351--Housing»

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Vanceburg is located on the banks of the Ohio River, twenty-three miles below Portsmouth and thirty-two miles up the river from Maysville.

The first cabins built here were built by Vance, McCormick and

. These same men later founded Fort Washington where Cincinnati now stands. One of them became first governor of Ohio, one first governor of Indiana and the other one first governor of the Northwest Territory.

In 1796 Boone in a deposition said he was at the salt works, at Salt Creek in 1779, and there was an Indian camp there at the time. The salt wells were located in the south end of town. This is where the Indians from Chillicothe, Ohio came to get their salt, which they obtained by boiling the salt down.

The first horses and cattle to come to Kentucky were put ashore here and then moved by foot to the section of the country around Lexington.

The town was incorporated in 1835, at this time it was called Alum City because of the Alum located around it. About the time it was incorporated there were three or four tanneries in the vicinity. One of these tanneries was operated by U. S. Grant's father. Grant himself was a small boy at this time.

Later they changed the name to Vanceburg in honor of the Vance family which was one of the earliest pioneer families to settle here.

One of the earliest industries in Vanceburg were some copper shops, that is making barrels. These barrels were shipped up and down the river. For awhile they quarried freestone extensively from this community. The U. S. Custom House and Post Office buildings of Chicago were made of this rock, but after the Chicago fire there was

no more demand for the stone as it was discovered at this time the rock couldn't stand the heat. It caused it to crack.

There used to be an important button factory here. The mussels were taken out of the mussel beds up and down the Ohio River and transported both by boat and train to the button factory. They finally suspended operations due to the fact that mussels were not too plentiful and various other reasons.

At one time they had a spoke factory, a cigar factory and the last was a shoe factory which suspended operation about two years ago.

At the present time there is no industry in Vanceburg, other than a few saw mills. Many people work in Portsmouth or Maysville and commute.

Most off of the houses right in Vanceburg are rather old. The people who live there and are building new homes are going outside the city limits, so they can build on higher ground that will not be flooded by the river.

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